

message

*F*rom the Chairman

As the last comer to the Number Registry community, AfriNIC, the African Internet Registry, has now gained its full speed and has surpassed the promise placed on it in 2005 upon its recognition by ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers). Indeed, 2007 has been yet another busy year of consolidation of AfriNIC's activities as per its initial business plan; the past year was also one of full operation as one of the five custodians of the address space allocation.

But as figures may speak better than words, I would like to put into perspective a few results that were achieved in 2007: the AfriNIC consumer base increased from 327 in December 2006 to 410 in December 2007. Allocations also went up by more than 100% in 2007. The staff increased from 6 to 9, our income increased by 30% and consequently, our reserve has been comfortably established to cover 10-12 months

of operation. Of course, 2007 also saw an increase in our spending, especially with the end of the incubation period and the gradual decrease of South African Government contribution to the technical operation costs. A most important highlight for 2007 was a closer involvement of the community, with a greater participation in the policy development process with six policies proposed and three being ratified by the Board.

In 2007, AfriNIC has strived to maintain its quality of services as well as to facilitate its interaction with the members. A member survey has now yielded crucial insights into the members' perception and needs, and 2008 is likely to see more customer-oriented services and facilities. As a not-for-profit organization, AfriNIC has included development and facilitation of internetworking in Africa as one of its core missions.

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Thus it has enrolled in an aggressive training program over the past year and has established a fellowship program to facilitate participation of its community in policy development forums. Another initiative which the AfriNIC Board decided was the inception of an AfriNIC fund to further assist in advancing development and operation of Internet infrastructures on the African continent.

AfriNIC has maintained its level of participation in the global discussions on issues related to Internet governance and the depletion of the IPv4 protocol. In fact, most of AfriNIC's training program has been geared towards a technical appraisal and adoption of the IPv6 protocol. It is likely that 2008 will see an increased focus on the burning issue of IPv4 central pool exhaustion and IPv6 adoption in our region, while the Board has already paved the way for a smoother adoption through a set of key decisions. The level of concluded partnerships is another measure of AfriNIC's tenure in 2007 with MoUs signed with other African internetworking institutions and groups (the so called Af*), and the constant collaboration with the other registries through the NRO, ICANN, ISOC and the ITU.

It is my pleasure to report that as a forward looking corporation, AfriNIC has embarked on its strategic planning process in 2007, with an inclusive participation from all parts, including the Board and staff members. The strategic planning process will be an opportunity to join and discipline our efforts towards a more productive and efficient AfriNIC. I have no doubt that with the new strategic plan, the path will be set for the coming years and for a smooth sail of AfriNIC. My call is for all of us to contribute so that AfriNIC fulfills its mission of promoting a responsible management of Internet resources across the African continent.

Pierre Dandjinou